

From PLATO to subject specific quality in social science education - experiences and theoretical perspectives from analyzing videos from social science education in the QUINT project

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The ambition in the QUINT project is to investigate quality in Nordic teaching and in the QUISST- project, specifically in social science education. As the LISA videos have been coded using the PLATO framework it was interesting to investigate what relevance this coding can have when applied to social science education. While PLATO was developed for ELA teaching we had to discuss whether these criteria for quality could be translated to social science education.

The PLATO elements are intended to capture four domains: "Instructional scaffolding", "disciplinary demand", "representation and use of content" and "classroom environment." The questions that arise from a subject specific point of view are 1) whether these domains are relevant for social science education 2) whether the PLATO elements capture relevant subject specific aspects of quality in these domains and 3) whether important subject specific aspects of quality are missed using the PLATO score?

In two projects we have taken the PLATO-codings as point of departure for, in the first

project investigation on disciplinary demand (Intellectual challenge) , and in the second project instructional scaffolding.

In these projects we have used the PLATO codes as a sampling method where we have selected teaching sequences scoring high and analyzed them qualitatively in order to understand what intellectually challenging teaching and instructional scaffolding can look like in social science education.

The results show that the PLATO-codings work well as a sampling method and makes it possible to detect sequences that are relevant for analysis. They also show that qualitative analysis are necessary for gaining an in-depth understanding of both the nature of intellectually challenging teaching and the scaffolding.

In this paper we will present an overview of these results as well as a more broad evaluation of the perspectives in using PLATO as an observation manual when researching quality in social science education.